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May 9, 1991
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68-01-7346

Mr. Gregory Ham
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
841 Chestnut Building
Ninth and Chestnut Streets
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19107

Subject: Final Report
TDD No. F3-9012-26
EPA DSN PA-2245
Facility ID No. PAD982363970
Valmont Site
Hazleton, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania

Dear Mr. Ham:

Submitted herewith is the final Work Plan for an expanded site inspection for the subject site.

The Valmont Site is located in an industrial park in Hazelton, Pennsylvania. Industry borders the site to the north, west, and south. A small residential development is located immediately northeast of the site. Woodlots and a commercial development are located east of the site. The borough of West Hazleton and the city of Hazleton are located less than one mile east of the site.

The site was originally owned by CAN DO, Incorporated, a nonprofit development organization located in Hazleton, Pennsylvania. CAN DO, Incorporated constructed the building shell at the site in 1963.

Available information indicates that the building was vacant from the time of its construction in 1963 until 1965. In 1965, Wallace Metals Products purchased the site and began operation. There is no information regarding Wallace Metal Products' operation at the site, although it is known that the company manufactured coffins. Wallace Metal Products ceased operations at the site in 1972. In 1972, Futura Fabrics, a division of Chelsea Industries, a manufacturer of knitting fabric and drapery material, purchased the property from Wallace Metal Products.

In July 1978, the site was purchased by the Valmont Group, of Paterson, New Jersey. The Valmont Group immediately leased the property to Chromatex, Incorporated. Several partners of the Valmont Group were stockholders in Chromatex, Incorporated until 1986, when the outstanding stock of Chromatex, Incorporated was sold to Rossville Industries, Incorporated, of Rossville, Georgia. The Valmont Group is still the current owner of the property; Chromatex, Incorporated is still the lessee.

Chromatex, Incorporated is an upholstery fabric manufacturer. Formerly, as part of a manufacturing process, Chromatex sprayed trichloroethene (TCE) on fabric as a transporter of Scotchguard (stain repellent). The facility used a solvent vapor recovery system inside the plant for the application of TCE onto the fabric. TCE was reclaimed using an activated carbon recovery system. Chromatex, Incorporated notified EPA of its RCRA hazardous waste generator status in August 1980. TCE was stored on the site in two 5,000-gallon above-ground storage tanks inside the building. An underground 10,000-gallon tank was used to store TCE in case of spills and emergencies. The use of TCE and the carbon absorption unit was discontinued in mid-1988.

Attention was called to the site in October 1987 when Continental White Cap, Incorporated, located near the Valmont Site, notified Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources (PA DER) of a small spill of alcohols at its facility, located west of Chromatex Plant No. 2. Upon further investigation by PA DER and after complaints by residents, home wells northeast of Chromatex Plant No. 2 were sampled. Sample results from PA DER revealed TCE concentrations as high as 1,400 ppb in home wells. These results initiated further investigation by the EPA TAT in October 1987.

The EPA Technical Assistance Team (TAT) performed a preliminary soil, gas, and groundwater investigation of the Chromatex property in October 1987. Soil gas results revealed two TCE plumes at the Chromatex facility. One plume located near the southwestern corner of the building revealed TCE in soil gas to levels up to 3.2 ppm. A much larger TCE plume was detected along the northern and eastern sides of the facility. TCE concentrations in this area ranged between 0.1 to 12.5 ppm. The highest concentrations were obtained along the eastern side of the building, near MW no. 11. In addition, headspace analysis was conducted on the underground emergency storage tank, and a level of 1,100 ppm TCE was revealed.

EPA emergency funding was required in December 1987 to install a public water line to the residential section immediately northeast of the site, as a result of the high levels of TCE discovered in home wells by PA DER.

Based on the results of the investigations by PA DER and TAT and other consultants, NUS has developed an expanded site inspection work plan to further assess the contamination problem at the site.

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This work plan will focus on the groundwater migration and soil exposure pathways to better define the potential impact the site-related contamination may have on the surrounding environment.

If you have any further questions, please contact me.

Respectfully submitted,

Keith Hambley
Project Manager

Reviewed by,

William Wentworth
Assistant Manager

Approved by,

Garth Glenn
Regional Manager,

SR/sjm